

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: NATO, PFOR, OVIP (SECDEF BROWN)
SUBJECT: SATURDAY MEDIA COVERAGE OF SECRETARY BROWN'S PRESS
CONFERENCE

1. REVIEW SATURDAY MORNING OF MAJOR EUROPEAN PAPERS IN
FRG, UK, FRANCE AND BELGIUM SHOW THAT ONLY THREE CARRIED
STORIES ON THE AWAACS DPC FINAL OUTCOME. SECRETARY'S PRESS
CONFERENCE WAS APPARENTLY TOO LATE TO MEET MAJORITY OF
PAPER'S DEADLINES.

2. PARIS HEARLD-TRIBUTE USING OWN STORY, CARRIED RELATIVELY
SHORT ITEM ON PAGE 2 UNDER HEADLINE "NATO UNDECIDED ON AN
AIRBORNE WARNING SYSTEM". FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STORY:
BEGIN TEXT: THE JOINT PURCHASE OF A \$2.5 BILLION AIRBORNE
EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (AWACS) BY THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER
MAJOR NATO MEMBERS WAS LEFT UNCERTAIN TODAY DESPITE
INTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS AT THE ALLIANCE HEADQUARTERS HERE.
THERE WERE CONFLICTING CLAIMS ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF THE
TALKS. MOST PARTICIPATNTS CLAIMED THAT THE TALKS HAD
BEEN QUOTE VERY DIFFICULT END QUOTE, ALTHOUGH THEY
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REAFFIRMED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM, WHICH WAS
SET UP BY A DECISION REACHED IN PRINCIPLE LAST JULY.
U.S. DEFENSE SECRETARY HAROLD BROWN SAID HE THOUGH IT
PROBABLE THAT NATO WOULD SET UP AN AIRBORNE WARNING
SYSTEM TO GUARD AGAINST A SOVIET ATTACK ON WESTERN
EUROPE. BUT BRITISH DEFENSE SECRETARY FRED MULLEY
ASSERTED HIS GOVERNMENT'S RIGHT TO DECIDE ON HOW IT
WOULD CONTRIBUTE. BECAUSE OF POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY
IN BRITAIN, ITALY AND DENMARK, NONE OF THESE NATIONS
IS PREPARED FOR THE MOMENT TO GIVE ALLUNEQUIVOCAL

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO THE PROJECT. MR. BROWN SAID AT A PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE HIKED THE U.S. PROPORTION OF THE AWACS COST TO ONE-THIRD FROM THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION'S PLEDGE OF 28 PER CENT. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE FOR THE ALLIANCE OF HAVING A SINGLE EARLY WARNING PROGRAM BUT HE SAID THAT IF THE OTHER NATO NATIONS WOULD NOT--OR COULD NOT--BUY SUCH A SYSTEM, QUOTE THAT'S THEIR DECISION. END QUOTE. END TEXT.

3. LE SOIR, BRUSSELS' LARGEST DAILY, CARRIES SMALL ITEM BOTTOM PAGE 4 UNDER HEADLINE "FINAL STAY FOR AWACS". PERTINENT STORY EXCERPTS: GATHERED IN BRUSSELS, NATO DEFENSE MINISTERS HAVE DECIDED TO ADOPT AWACS FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE 1980S SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF NATIONAL AUTHORITIES. A COMMUNIQUE WHICH ENDED SEVEN HOURS OF DIFFICULT DISCUSSION GIVES THE MODALITIES OF A COST SHARING FORMULA AND STATES THAT GOVERNMENTS WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AGREE ON A PROGRAM OF COOPERATION BY 1 JULY. NEVERTHELESS, THE UK RESERVED ON THE POSITION OF ITS GOVERNMENT AS TO THE BEST WAY IT CAN CONTRIBUTE. IF THE UK GOES ITS OWN WAY THE ENTIRE PROJECT WILL HAVE TO BE REVISED. THE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION WILL ONLY BE SYMBOLIC AND DENMARK HAS ASKED FOR TIME TO REFLECT. THE US'S CONTRIBUTION WAS INCREASED TO 33 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL COST. END EXCERPT.

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4. LA LIBRE BELGIGUE, BRUSSELS' SECOND LARGEST DAILY, HEADLINES ITS STORY ON PAGE 6 "AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPAL ON PURCHASE OF FLYING RADAR SYSTEM". PERTINENT STORY EXCERPTS: NATO DEFENSE MINISTERS REACHED AGREEMENT ON ACQUIRING 27 AIRBORNE RADAR AIRCRAFT. THIS IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE COMMON PURCHASE EVER UNDERTAKEN BY NATO AND IT WILL REQUIRE TWO YEARS OF TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL STUDIES BEFORE THE PROJECT SEES THE LIGHT OF DAY (SIC). THE BRITISH MINISTER NEVERTHELESS RESERVED ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S RIGHT TO DEFINE THE FORM OF ITS CONTRIBUTION. NOTHING SPECIAL IN REMAINDER OF ARTICLE.

5. BOTH LONDON TIMES AND TELEGRAPH CARRIED STORIES IN EDITIONS SEEN HERE ON AWACS MEETING, BUT BOTH APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN FILED ABOUT MIDDAY AND MAKE NO REFERENCE TO THE SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE OR THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE.

6. YOU WILL HAVE SEEN ALL AP, UP AND REUTER WIRE REPORTS AND NOTED THAT BOTH UPI AND REUTER, AT LEAST, HAVE CARRIED PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO DPC.

7. DEPENDING ON WHAT WEEKEND AND MONDAY MORNING LOOK REVEALS, WE WILL SEND ADDITIONAL REPORT MONDAY.

8. FYI. BRUSSELS VOA CORRESPONDENT TELLS US VOA, USING
DIRECT AFN HOOKUP TO SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE, BROAD-
CAST SAME LIVE FROM WASHINGTON LAST NIGHT.
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